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Bosnia's Slow Going

In mid-April, Commission staff visited Bosnia-Herzegovina at the invitation of the Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) to examine prospects for Bosnian participation in the Assembly and to observe progress being made toward Bosnia-Herzegovina's local elections scheduled for September. Overall progress in Bosnia-Herzegovina continues at a slow pace and only due to continual intervention by the international community, particularly the United States.

While Bosnian authorities agreed to the start of Central Bank operations, parliamentary organizational matters and some election regulations during the visit, it be-

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Former parliamentarians Selim Sadak, Hatip Dicle, Leyla Zana, and Orhan Dogan, OSCEPA delegation members Vaananen, Schoch, Lennmarker and Ruperez (l to r)

Turkey's Human Rights Assessed By OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Delegation

An OSCE PA delegation led by Assembly President Javier Ruperez of Spain visited Turkey in late April at the invitation of Turkey's Grand National Assembly President Mustafa Kalemli. Ruperez was joined by parliamentarians Otto Schoch of Switzerland, Guikje Roethof of the Netherlands, and Göran Lennmarker of Sweden, Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE PA Pentti Väänänen and CSCE Commission staff. Much of the delegation's work focused on assessing developments, including human rights, since Assembly representatives last visited Turkey in 1995. Ms. Roethof and Mr. Väänänen had participated in the previous delegation. Korkut Özal, Head of the Turkish Delegation to the OSCE PA, hosted the delegation, participated in many of the official meetings in Ankara and accompanied the group to the southeastern city of Diyarbakir.

The visit took place against the backdrop of a major resolution on Turkey—introduced by the U.S. delegation and overwhelmingly adopted at the Assembly's annual session last year in Stockholm—that condemned "terrorism in all forms, especially by radical groups such as the PKK, and [called] for the urgent termination of any kind of logistical and financial support provided by some countries." In addition, the resolution called upon the Government of Turkey to undertake a series of concrete steps aimed at

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The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, by law, monitors and encourages progress in implementing the provisions of the Helsinki Accords. The Commission, created in 1976, is made up of nine Senators, nine Representatives, and one official each from the Departments of State, Defense, and Commerce. For more information, please call (202) 225-1901.

Albanian Turmoil Causes The International Community To Respond

While Albania has surfaced from its plunge into the depths of chaos earlier this year, continued instability remains a threat absent a reliable lifeline from the international community. Various international bodies have offered a rescue, but political factions within the country have been hesitant to take a firm grasp of the opportunity.

The OSCE, through a personal representative of the OSCE Chair-in-Office, has taken the lead in mediating internal Albanian political disputes. Former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, serving as personal representative, has shuttled between meetings with rebel leaders, the country's president and a coalition government of "national reconciliation" in an attempt to reestablish order, and prepare for new parliamentary elections targeted for June 29. Differences between the ruling Democratic Party and all other major political parties regarding which electoral system to stress—proportional or majoritarian—have led, however, to threats of boycotts and possible postponement. For now, however, the OSCE presence in Albania is being strengthened with elections experts who hope to establish a credible electoral process in which those elected will have the legitimacy to resolve the crisis.

Meanwhile, after considerable debate in Rome, a 6,000-strong multinational force led by Italy and including forces from seven other countries was deployed in April to secure the delivery of humanitarian aid and security for election officials.

While a humanitarian crisis does not seem to exist now, the situation is tenuous enough to warrant strong attention. Moreover, Italy and Greece remain concerned that the numbers of new refugees could swell beyond the current estimate of 15,000, of which Italy has received the most. Concerned that criminals are among the number, some have been returned.

Italy's treatment of the refugees has been viewed as generally satisfactory, although the United Nations has criticized Italian attempts to turn boats of refugees around in the Adriatic before they reach the Italian coast.

Italy also hopes to convene an international conference regarding Albania and how to help it. The focus will mostly be on the question of financial assistance. Many have called for a program to encourage the very well-armed Albanian population to surrender its weapons, perhaps through a buy-back program, but there has been little concrete progress in this area. Increased security and at least the promise of some economic recovery are viewed as important for a successful election and a subsequent

return to social and political order.

Continued confusion over the roots of Albania's problems has hindered a more clearly defined international response. Some see the chaos as the natural outburst of a collectively emotional population to the sudden collapse of "pyramid schemes" which promised quick financial returns for the majority of the population that

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OSCE Presence In Albania

Mandate

- provide a coordinating framework for other international organizations;
- provide advice and assistance, especially regarding democratization, the media and human rights as well as election preparation and monitoring; and
- other possibilities, including monitoring the collection of weapons.

Duration

- three months, assuming elections in June, to be reviewed after elections are held.

Personnel

- Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office, Franz Vranitzky (Austria);
- Resident Deputy of the Personal Representative, Herbert Grubmayr (Austria);
- 20 headquartered Tirana staff for political, elections, media, human rights and other matters and 100 field officers in teams of 2 tentatively planned to be based in Durres, Elbasan, Fier, Gjirokaster, Kavaje, Kruje, Lezhe, Lushnje and Vlore for local government liaison and to assist technical advisors;
- additional technical experts as needed; and
- approximately 400 short- and long-term election observers, coordinated by but separate from the OSCE.



ODIHR Election Observation And Administration Seminar Held In Warsaw

Commission staff attended the Human Dimension Seminar on Administration and Observation of Elections sponsored by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw April 8-11. Representatives of 46 nations, four international organizations and several non-governmental organizations participated. The conference began with a half-day plenary session. Participants then divided into two groups—Election Administration and Election Observation—for two days to exchange ideas on a designated agenda, and reconvened for a final plenary session to hear the general conclusions of the *rapporteurs* and final statements by participating delegations.

The opening and keynote address was delivered by U.S. Federal Elections Commissioner (FEC) Danny L. McDonald who stated that OSCE commitments “emphasize the central role of elections in securing the citizen’s right to participate in the government of his or her choice,” summing up these commitments as, “Universal, Equal, Fair, Secret, Free, Transparent and Accountable.”

Discussion in the Election Administration sessions emphasized preparatory work, including planning, scheduling, timetables, civic and voter education, media information procedures, and selection of personnel. Conferencees agreed that election commissions, despite differences in structure and composition, should be competent, independent and impartial. Great attention was paid to the building of public confidence through both partisan and nonpartisan presence at the polls, and the selection of poll workers through a process designed to enhance that confidence, since the polling place is the only contact most voters have with the electoral process. The participants generally favored permanent electoral commissions as the model for election administration, observing that “*ad hoc* commissions had difficulty maintaining voter registers, providing consistent administrative performance, and maintaining the ever-important institutional memory.”

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CSCE

Croatia’s Transitional Elections

On April 13, Croatia held its fifth set of elections since political pluralism was introduced in the former Yugoslav republic in 1989—and the fourth since achieving independent statehood in 1991. Seats in the parliament’s upper chamber and on county and municipal councils were contested.

The Commission held briefing on March 21 in the lead-up to its observation of the elections. Panelists noted that while the elections were not for those seats with the most legislative authority, the elections were still important because Croatia’s post-conflict democratic transition is key to the country’s acceptance in European affairs and to regional stability. The panelists felt that the

most critical elections would be those held in Serb-controlled Eastern Slavonia, which the United Nations is hoping to reintegrate into Croatia peacefully without a mass exodus of the local Serb population. The elections also have generated interest because of what they might indicate about Croatia’s political transition, since they were scheduled two months prior to a presidential election in which President Franjo Tudjman will seek another term despite apparent deteriorating health. While Tudjman’s personal popularity remains high, his ruling party is being questioned, and new coalitions of opposi-

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ODIHR Director Glover and U.S. FEC Commissioner McDonald in opening plenary

The Election Observer sessions included many representatives from the foreign service of their respective nations. They agreed that a standard letter from participating States offering invitations to observe elections could outline the observers' code of conduct, and could also request specific technical assistance. There was concurrence on the need for two types of observers, "long term observers" who would observe the preparations, campaign process, and aftermath of the election; and "short term" who would be in the country specifically for the few days before and including the election. The discussants noted the current trend away from general observer judgements about elections as "free and fair," to a focus on the application of common standards in the conduct of elections.

The greatest emphasis in both sessions was on "transparency." Much of the discussion focused on the openness of election procedures, from early decision making through the compilation of voter lists, selection of poll workers, and counting and tallying of the ballots. To a great extent, it was felt that international observers should be a *supplement* to *domestic* observers and local media, and that they should never be a substitute. Although openness, or transparency, was recognized as a potential source of confusion for the public when changes in procedures or corrections in the unofficial tally must be made, it was generally agreed that an open system is more likely to be perceived as fair than one in which essential information was retained by only a few.

In the final plenary session, the U.S. delegation offered the following remarks:

"Such a program would have been premature a few years ago, but the gradual definition, development and acceptance of democratic processes throughout the

OSCE, have now reached a level of acceptance and practice which allows for the exchange of ideas on this topic between all participating States as equals.

"We have found it extremely useful, and enlightening, as the participants shared their perspectives on the implementation of accepted electoral procedures at local and national levels, and to hear how each of our countries in this community of democracies views the role and future of international election observers.

"There are several points, however, that either deserve reiteration and emphasis, or need to be raised anew.

"We cannot over emphasize the importance of transparency of elections for the success and maintenance of a democracy. Transparency, the exposure of the rudimentary facets of the electoral process to sunlight, is a key component in assuring universal voluntary participation AND confidence. The commitment to a true democratic process requires faith, something we rarely talk about in a political context: Faith in our fellow citizens, faith in our civil institutions and faith in the intentions of those who design and implement any democratic electoral system.

"It is within this context that the Copenhagen Document says:

"The participating States declare that the will of the people, freely and fairly expressed through periodic and genuine elections, is the basis of the authority and legitimacy of all government [emphasis added]. The participating States will accordingly re-



Dr. Richard G. Smolka, Professor Emeritus, American University and Editor, Election Administration Reports, public member of the U.S. delegation

spect the right of their citizens to take part in the governing of their country, either directly or through representatives freely chosen by them through fair electoral processes.

“Certain comments in this Seminar pointed out many areas that we should all focus on in our efforts to meet the objectives of Copenhagen:

“* National election codes appear to best insure the appropriate procedural environment for elections, and are one of the best tools to insure transparency. Such codes, however, must be based on constitutional standards of free speech, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly to have any real meaning;

“* Legal standards for elections and public participation must be written such that there is little room for interpretation, especially such that neither individuals nor the State may use the law as a tool to inhibit the will of the people;

“* Public officials, especially those directly responsible for the conduct and administration of elections, must be committed to the process of the election rather than to any particular outcome. Transparency is enhanced when the administering bodies are composed of members selected or approved by the contending parties;

“* Continuity in the application of electoral procedures requires the ongoing presence of at least a nucleus of administrators who have the necessary expertise to rapidly and accurately prepare for subsequent elections, rather than reinventing the wheel for each election, for it is easier to conduct free and fair elections from a sound organizational base than to try and correct problems after a vote has been taken. Likewise, without a standing electoral commission, realistic budgets and material needs often do not materialize;

“* Citizens should be the final judge of what is free and fair, and their judgement is a personal one formed at the polling place. Thus appropriate election day procedures are critical to public confidence in the process, as well as to the administrative goals of an efficient count;

“* While non-partisan participation is more than welcome, partisan participation should also be considered for all levels of the electoral process. The commitment



The Elections Observation Working Group in Warsaw

of time and the sense of purpose of those in the political process is just what is necessary for these systems to work.

“* Procedures for redress of grievances within the rule of law are an essential, integral part of the electoral process. Citizens who have been wronged by being left off a register, for example, deserve more than arbitrary justice. After all, this is their birthright that has been denied them;

“* The comprehensive discussions during this seminar on the observation of elections have emphasized the role that international and national observers can play in keeping the entire electoral process fair, open and credible. Somewhat paradoxically, the ultimate task of observers, both national and international, is to work themselves out of a job, by helping to develop and sustain the faith in the system that is essential to the survival of democracy. Each time an election takes place that is characterized as free and fair, the extraordinary—the ritual-

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ized expression of the popular will through the ballot— becomes a routine exercise in maintaining the normalcy of a democracy.

“* The many valuable suggestions made by participants in the discussions on election observation point to the experience gained over the last several years by participating States and NGOs alike. Indeed, this entire seminar has brought out the importance of a productive exchange of ideas between governments and NGOs that is increasingly becoming the hallmark of the OSCE. The proposals made during our discussion will help ODIHR de-

velop guidelines for international observers and will put governments on notice as to what is expected of them.

“And finally, a few thoughts about the role of the media, a subject that, unfortunately received far too little attention here. The media are one of the best checks against corruption and fraud in any electoral process. Members of the press, both national and international, are the first line of election observers. Now, of course, we are speaking of a free and independent media. Many in government view the media as a threat, especially when they hold differing views. But we must remember that at Copenhagen we all agreed that we would:

“Provide that no legal or administrative obstacle stands in the way of unimpeded access to the media on a non-discriminatory basis for all political groupings and individuals wishing to participate in the electoral process.

“The corollary to this is that there must be media to which to have access. In recent months we have seen certain States close down radio stations under various

pretexts, revoke television licenses under contrived circumstances, and several newspapers have been forced out of business through the application of arbitrary and capricious taxation. Censorship is the norm in several



The ODIHR Elections Seminar discusses the media

States represented at this table, and the assassination of journalists has become terribly commonplace in certain areas, according to the international Committee to Protect Journalists. These practices place in doubt certain States’ commitment not only to the Copenhagen Document, but a commitment to the Helsinki Process writ large.

“We hope that when next we gather to discuss such issues these circumstances will have changed to reflect the spirit of Helsinki.

“We also hope that you will all return home and hold such seminars for your own people, in as open and frank a manner as we saw here in Warsaw. For while we can all exchange views and ideas within this international forum, while we may participate within each others’ States as observers, the ultimate challenge and responsibility for successful elections rests with the citizenry of each State, dependent upon the standards of civic virtue that are the touchstone of a true democrat.”

☞ Chadwick R. Gore



Observers of the Bulgarian elections at the opening OSCE press conference in Sophia

Commission Staff Observes Elections In Bulgaria

Commission staff were among some 200 international observers who traveled to Bulgaria to observe the April 19 parliamentary elections as part of the observer delegation of the OSCE PA. Staff observed the election process in the city of Veliko Turnovo in north-central Bulgaria, then traveled south to Gabrovo, visiting polling stations in towns and villages on the way and returned to observe the vote count in Veliko Turnovo.

Both the relatively quiet, low-key election campaign and the vote were free and fair, orderly and well-run. Only a small number of minor irregularities were noted by Commission staff and other observers. The election, Bulgaria's eighth since the fall of communism (four parliamentary, two presidential and two municipal elections), demonstrated that democratic procedures have put down strong roots in Bulgaria.

The anti-Communist United Democratic Forces (UDF) won a resounding victory in the pre-term parliamentary elections, gaining an absolute majority in the parliament (137 out of 240 seats in the National Assembly). This represents a clear comeback from their defeat in the October 1994 elections.

The UDF victory was precipitated by an economic crisis which led to massive street protests in January 1997 culminating in the fall from power of the ruling Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) in early February and forcing early elections. The economic crisis, Bulgaria's most severe since the 1989 fall of communism, was the result of So-

cialist government mismanagement and corruption. The BSP lost much of its power base, and, with continuing internal difficulties, could be nearing its eventual political demise.

In addition to the UDF, which garnered 52.26 percent of the total votes cast, four other party coalitions passed the four percent representational threshold: Democratic Left (Bulgarian Socialist Party)—22.07 percent; Alliance for National Salvation (ethnic Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedoms and monarchists, agrarians and liberals)—7.6 percent; Euro-Left coalition—5.5 percent; and the Bulgarian Business Bloc—4.93 percent. The national turnout, at 62 percent, was low by Bulgarian standards.

The new UDF government's greatest challenge will be to improve the bleak economic situation by undertaking strong economic reform measures to rehabilitate and restructure the economy combined with serious efforts to combat corruption. To its credit, the February-April 1997 caretaker government, composed mostly of UDF members and led by Sofia mayor Stefan Sofiyanski, took important steps to bring Bulgaria back from the brink of bankruptcy, including signing an agreement with the IMF for \$657 million.

A national consensus appears to exist on the need for sweeping reforms, although there are differences in emphasis, with Socialists and the Euro-Left emphasizing the social costs of reform. On May 8, Bulgaria's

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*Ms. Mihailova of the UDF (l)
with interpreter*

newly elected parliament adopted a “National Salvation” declaration calling for the establishment of a currency board and carrying out other reforms agreed to with the IMF, combating organized crime, opening secret police files on public figures, and membership in NATO and the EU.

Bulgaria will continue to strengthen its pro-European orientation. The UDF government’s top foreign policy goal is the country’s full membership in the EU and NATO. All other parliamentary parties—to varying degrees—also support integration into Europe, although the Socialists favor a referendum on NATO membership, and other parties are concerned about the possible costs involved.

While in Bulgaria, Commission staff also met with human rights activists and religious leaders [see article, this page]. Bulgaria’s generally positive record with respect to human rights and fundamental freedoms is tainted by its treatment of some “non-traditional” religious groups.

The staff report on Bulgaria’s Parliamentary Election is available from the Commission.

✉ Orest Deychakiwsky



*Pavel Ignatov, Amb. and former Prime Minister Philip Dimitrov
and Nikolay Nedelchev at Evangelical Alliance Revival*

Bulgaria And Freedom Of Religion:

A Mixed Bag

While in Bulgaria to observe the parliamentary elections [see accompanying article] Commission staff held meetings with representatives of various sectors of society in an effort to gain a full picture of the environment within which these elections, and the preceding campaigns, were being held. Many of the same standards for free and fair elections are necessary for a society to meet the standards for freedom of religion—specifically free speech, assembly and thought. Discussions were also held with U.S. Embassy staff in Sofia.

Some of the reports were rather disturbing, yet there seemed to be a ray of hope. The following is a compilation of reports from all of these sources.

First, a procedural note. The Bulgarian Constitution guarantees freedom of religion. There are, however, regulations that must be met for religious organizations to function legally. Specifically, they must apply to register with the central government *and* have their registration accepted *by* the government. Without such registration these organizations may not open bank accounts, own land or other property, or carry insurance and are not entitled to standing in a court of law. Currently mainstream faiths are registered, such as the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, the Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian and other Protestant denominations, and Islam. Other churches are viewed as “sects,” specifically Jehovah’s Witness, Word of Life, the Unification Church, the Mormon Church and some Evangelical and Pentecostal organizations.

These faiths have had difficulty getting registered, if they are allowed to register at all.

Interestingly, five of the main Protestant churches which have been registered for several years have been trying for five years to register the Bulgarian Evangelical Alliance with each of them as members. Ironically, the Alliance has yet to be allowed to register, yet has been allowed to function anyway, even going so far as to be involved in a 1996 National Conference on the Rights of Religious Minorities, co-sponsored by the Bulgarian Helsinki Commission, with over 100 other religious leaders, government officials and European human rights advocates.

Reports had been received of unidentifiable brigands breaking down the door of a private residence some forty miles from Sofia to attack a member of the Unification Church. The church representative was a man in his seventies. He was soundly beaten, the home he was visiting was ransacked, and all of his religious material was destroyed. While suspicions were voiced about a direct connection between the thugs and the police, at that time no proof of such suspicions had been produced. More alarming was a newspaper account reported in the *Standard News* on April 13:

“All travelers and baggage at Sofia Airport are being thoroughly checked for sect literature, reported from the Customs Chief Administration. The officers at the airport have received information about a large shipment of books, leaflets and promotional materials of the Mormons. According to preliminary data, sect books were going to arrive by plane from Western Europe. The offshoot of the Mormon community in Bulgaria was preparing a new mass baiting of teenagers, experts believe. Upset parents warned the National Security Service of the danger. ‘We will not allow the sect to spread

its influence among our children,’ the customs officer from the shift on duty at the airport vowed.”

Commission staff was told of an incident concerning several Mormon missionaries who had arrived at the airport, and were escorted into a separate room, searched and threatened. Their baggage was opened and rifled, and personal prescription medications of one of the persons was dumped into water and destroyed. All of their religious materials were confiscated, and they were told, “We know more of you are coming and we will do the same to them.”

In contrast to these legal and rather thuggish impediments to religious activity, on

Sunday, April 20, the day after the election, CSCE staff attended a massive religious revival meeting in the old Communist-era Palace of Culture. Led by the Rev. Nikolay Nedelchev, executive director of the Bulgarian Evangelical Alliance, over three thousand of the faithful met for almost 3 hours in a demonstrable display of freedom of religion—even though the Alliance has not been allowed to register! The fact that a mere ten years ago most of the leaders of this event would have been con-



Latchezar Popov (r) of the Rule of Law Foundation, and the Evangelical Alliance, with Regional Judge Alexey Ivanov

sidered dissidents is noteworthy.

What *exactly* is the status of freedom of religion in Bulgaria? It is a mixed bag. Adherents of certain faiths may run full force into suppression by the state. Evangelical believers are apt to encounter resistance and inconvenience, but not the direct physical confrontation of the old days. But the Orthodox faithful can go about business as usual. Attention must still be paid to this issue in Bulgaria, even though there is a ray of hope in the avowed intentions of the newly-elected government. Most Bulgarians can practice their religion—and the speech that comes with it—without fear, but Bulgaria still has a way to go one can confidently say they protect freedom of religion, in keeping with Helsinki Principles.

☞ Chadwick R. Gore

Bosnia, *continued from page 43*

came obvious that dialogue—let alone agreement—does not occur without the mediating presence of the international community. For example, the agreements to begin parliamentary operations on April 30 and to issue bank coupons redeemable throughout the country were directly linked to the scheduling of a new donors' conference. The latter development needed the added boost of a visit by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John Kornblum. Clearly one of the main arguments for holding the elections last September—to establish institutions that would bring all Bosnians together without outside coaxing—has not become reality, with all parties fail to act in what seems to be their respective best interests.

The international community remains, therefore, overwhelmingly visible in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Sarajevo in particular. While this presence certainly deters new conflict, it is incredibly costly, and its effectiveness seems undermined for three reasons:

- A loss of momentum caused by the frustration over the inability of all Bosnian parties to act in their own interest and the lack of political will of foreign governments to take decisive steps to change the situation;

- A rift between European countries resentful of their obvious inability to act decisively to stop the Bosnian conflict and the United States which is determined to implement the Dayton Agreement, even, it seems, at the expense of larger principles; and

- Publicly known deadlines for the withdrawal of SFOR—or at least the American component—by no later than June 1998, which ensure that progress will be limited as the parties envision their options and leverage against each other based on what may be very wrong assumptions by all regarding their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Centrifugal forces within the country are evident. Politically, all three parties support joint endeavors in keeping with the Dayton Agreement, but their sincerity is questionable:

- During the recent visit of President Alija Izetbegovic to Washington, his entourage was virtually all ethnic Bosniac.

- Republika Srpska remains under the continued control of Momcilo Krajisnik and ultimately Radovan Karadzic, and Krajisnik's recalcitrance—exhibited

even in his refusal to participate in ceremonies like those surrounding the otherwise successful visit of Pope John Paul II—is simply expected. Republika Srpska, moreover, is believed to be grossly out of compliance with agreed arms control measures.

- Croat leaders appear cooperative in Sarajevo, but the unrecognized entity of Herceg-Bosna is still known to be functioning.

The international community may, however, be giving the country its most needed commodity—time. What appears to be political posturing may, with time, turn into traditional deal-making. This is especially the case if, beneath the surface, the parties are actually assessing the risks beyond SFOR withdrawal along with perceived opportunities, which the United States at least is encouraging them to do. All parties seem to want the municipal elections in September, with the period for registering of political parties, and a voter registration drive that includes a major public awareness program now underway. Among the people, there is also anecdotal evidence that reconciliation can occur. In the north, Tuzla remains the strongest symbol of a multi-ethnic society, and an “Arizona market,” similar to that established for Eastern Slavonia in Croatia, thrives in a trade between people living in Bosnia's two entities. In the south, the attacks on Bosniacs by Croat authorities in Mostar a few months ago may go beyond what even the local Croat population finds acceptable, and there may be some moderation of behavior as a result.

Inter-entity traffic continues to increase, despite new harassment of Bosniacs entering Republika Srpska. Serbs originally from the Federation town of Drvar, which was held by Serb militants during the conflict but was returned in late 1995, continue to seek to return, albeit with some local resistance. This may encourage others living as displaced persons in Republika Srpska also to return. And, the creation of a “shadow government” by political parties from both entities indicates some creative political experimentation and a desire to develop ties.

One consistent comment expressed was that fear, not hatred, deters reintegration, making such a goal very difficult but ultimately not impossible to achieve.

✉ Bob Hand



*Tatyana Chernova, wife of Alexandr Nikitin,
and daughter Yulia*

CSCE, Sierra Club focus on Nikitin's "Sinking, Radioactive, Nightmare"

On April 24, the Commission joined the Sierra Club in presenting "A Sinking Radioactive Nightmare," a film about the world's largest submarine construction plant in Severodvinsk, Russia. The Swedish TV film exposed how decades of environmental disregard and the current financial straits of regional authorities are turning the seaport into a "sinking, radioactive nightmare." Nikitin's wife, Tatyana Chernova, and representatives of the Bellona Foundation answered questions after the film.

The film was accompanied by an ABC News filmclip featuring retired Russian naval officer Alexandr Nikitin as ABC's "Person of the Week," and describing Nikitin's current travails with the Russian security apparatus. When Nikitin, working with Norway's Bellona Foundation, revealed the extent of the ecological dangers of Russia's deteriorating Northern Fleet, he was arrested by Russian authorities and charged with espionage—despite the fact that all the materials used in the Bellona report were garnered from public sources. Nikitin was subsequently held in pre-trial detention from February 1995 until December 1996. Although released from jail, he has not been permitted to leave Russia, and the original espionage charges are still pending. Nikitin has been listed by Amnesty International as Russia's first and only political prisoner since the fall of the Soviet Union.

A Russian court is expected to make a final determination on prosecuting the case against Nikitin on June 15.

☞ John Finerty

Chechnya roundup

Chechen Peace Accords Signed in Moscow: On Monday, May 12, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov signed a peace pact formally ending the bloody conflict between the Russian Federation and the breakaway North Caucasus region. While the exact territorial status of Chechnya is not clarified in terms of the pact, both sides pledged to refrain from force or threats in future dealings and to build relations in accordance with international law. Russian spokesmen continued to maintain that the pact does not signify Moscow's recognition of independence for Chechnya. The truce previously signed at Khasav'yurt, Dagestan, in August 1996 led to the withdrawal of Russian military forces from Chechnya and contained an agreement that Chechnya would determine its relationship with Russia within the next five years.

In the wake of the political agreement, President Maskhadov and Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin also signed an agreement on economic cooperation that envisions cooperation between Moscow and Grozny for reconstruction of Chechnya, and compensation for victims of the war.

NTV Reporter Elena Masyuk Kidnaped in Grozny: Meanwhile, in Chechnya an ongoing wave of kidnappings continued with the abduction of prominent Moscow NTV television journalist Elena Masyuk, along with her cameraman and soundman near the village of Samashki. Ms. Masyuk gained international recognition for her courageous coverage of the Chechen war. She spoke in Washington at a Commission briefing on the status of the media in Russia in May 1996.

New OSCE Mission Head Posted: Ambassador Rudolf Thorning-Petersen has succeeded Ambassador Tim Guldemann as head of the OSCE assistance mission to Chechnya based in Grozny. Ambassador Petersen previously has served as Denmark's Ambassador to the Peoples' Republic of China, Russia, and the United Kingdom.

☞ John Finerty

Experts discuss continued use of torture in Turkey

On April 8, the Commission held a briefing to examine reports of continued, and well-documented, violations of international humanitarian law in Turkey, focusing on the continued use of torture and efforts to assist the victims of such abuse. Despite the Turkish Constitution's ban on torture, and public pledges by successive governments to end torture, the practice continues. Torture remains a grave problem and stands in clear violation of Turkey's legal obligations under numerous international conventions, including the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture has found the incidence of torture and ill-treatment in Turkey to be "widespread." The UN Committee on Torture has referred to "systemic" use of torture in Turkey.

Holly Cartner, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, cited Turkey's mixed human rights record. Despite some areas of improvement, Cartner voiced continued concern over "ongoing and very severe human rights abuses as well as the political will that is lacking to deal with them." Drawing from findings contained in a recently issued Human Rights Watch/Helsinki report, she said, "While criminal suspects also face the prospect of torture and maltreatment at the hands of regular police, Turkey's anti-terror police have become quite infamous because of their widespread use of sophisticated torture methods, which they consistently attempt to perfect to inflict pain without leaving the traces of their abuse." Cartner continued, "Torture by the anti-terror unit is neither spontaneous nor rogue. This unit has methodically incorporated torture and abuse into its daily operations, utilizing specialized equipment."

Commonly employed methods of torture reported by the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey's torture treatment centers include: high-pressure cold water hoses, electric shocks, beating on the soles of the feet, beating of the genitalia, hanging by the arms, blindfolding, sleep deprivation, deprivation of clothing, systemic beatings, and vaginal and anal rape with truncheons and, in some instances, gun barrels.

As international and domestic scrutiny of torture in Turkey has increased, according to Cartner, the anti-terror unit's methods have become more sophisticated. Sometimes police pressure doctors to fill out false medical reports of detainees, she said. Cartner noted that often detainees are tortured intensively during the first few days of their incarceration, then allowed to recover so that the evidence of abuse fades before the victim is brought before a magistrate. Such conclusions are consistent with the findings of human rights attorneys and physicians who treat the victims of torture. The perpetrators of such gross human rights violations are rarely, if ever, held accountable for their actions. Detainees interviewed in preparation of the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki report indicated that prosecutors often ignored their claims of mistreatment at the hands of the police.

"I would point out that it is not solely or primarily a matter of legal reform in Turkey that is necessary for ending torture," Cartner observed. "For the latest government efforts to be successful, the greatest obstacle to ending torture and other police abuse in Turkey is police impunity," she concluded.

Dr. Erik Holst, President of the Rehabilitation and Research Center for Torture, and Vice President of the Copenhagen-based International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims, discussed the medical aspects of torture, referring to guidelines to prevent physicians from getting directly or indirectly involved in the practice of torture. The World Medical Association adopted these guidelines in its 1975 Tokyo Declaration. The first Rehabilitation and Research Center for Torture Victims was established in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1982. The Copenhagen center has provided assistance to torture victims from over 55 countries, through a combination of psychotherapy and physical therapy together with social assistance.

The first center for victims of torture was established in Turkey by the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey in 1990, Holst pointed out. The Foundation operates centers in Ankara, Izmir, Istanbul, and Adana that have provided counseling and referral services to more than 3,000 clients. The centers have systematically recorded their findings and published statistical data clearly documenting past, and unfortunately, ongoing use of torture in Turkey, Holst said.

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OSCE Religious Liberty seminar held

Dom Polonii in Pultusku, site of the ODIHR Seminar on Religious Liberty

A meeting of religious liberty experts was convened April 26-27 by the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Pultusk, Poland to “prepare a report on freedom of religion in the OSCE region, monitor violations of religious liberty and discuss the possibility of a future seminar on the issue of proselytism.” The meeting was attended by religious liberty experts selected by the staff of the ODIHR and were mainly from academia.

Reports were heard from individual experts on issues ranging from religious liberty in Russia to the work of the European Consortium for State and Church in Europe. Commission staff made a presentation on the meaning of religious liberty in practice in the OSCE. The second day was devoted to discussion, with particular focus on the religious liberty provisions of Section 16 of the Vienna Concluding Document.

While the meeting served some educational purposes by acquainting the experts with the work that is continuing in the field by various international bodies, the panel of experts as a whole was unable to achieve consensus on a number of key issues. The panel had difficulty determining the steps needed to assist the participating States in insuring that religious liberty is respected, and demonstrated a marked unwillingness to advise the ODIHR and the OSCE on the meaning of religious liberty in practice. This disinclination to engage in substantive dialogue and to advise the ODIHR in a concrete manner leaves open the question of whether the meeting was worthy of the effort

and money expended. While there may be some positive repercussions from the meeting in that the issue of religious liberty may gain some attention within the OSCE, it is questionable whether, in the long run, such gatherings of experts really produce concrete and long-lasting outcomes. Similar meetings and seminars in the past have not produced the results sought, and there is serious debate within the OSCE participating States whether these types of meetings should continue.



Religion experts struggle over the process of addressing the issues

✉ Karen Lord

Delegation, continued from page 43

improving the human rights situation: release of prisoners detained for non-violent expressions of their views; abolishment of Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law and Article 312 of the Penal Code; ending the widespread use of torture by police and persecution of those providing treatment to victims of torture; promotion of economic, social, and cultural development of the southeastern region; and, establishment of a consultative mechanism for dialogue with certain non-violent Kurdish-based organizations. The Assembly also urged the OSCE Chair-in-Office to send a personal representative to Turkey to develop recommendations regarding the scope and mandate for future OSCE activities.

The delegation was received at the highest political level and met with President Suleyman Demirel, an original signatory of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. Sessions were also held with Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, several cabinet ministers, the Turkish General Staff, the leaders of most major political parties, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The delegation arrived amid a political crisis threatening the coalition government of the Refah (Welfare) Party and the True Path Party—the first Islamist-majority government since Turkey was declared a secular state in 1923—that holds a slim majority in the 550-member parliament.

Ruperez appealed to President Demirel to pardon four imprisoned former parliamentarians from the now banned Kurdish Democracy Party (DEP): Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan, and Selim Sadak, who have completed three years of their 15-year sentences under Article 168-1 of the Anti-Terrorism Law. Demirel responded by noting that a pardon of the four former parliamentarians is beyond his constitutional authority and stressed that the former MPs had been found guilty by a court of the independent judiciary. The President ex-

pressed optimism over the country's battle against terrorism, a view voiced repeatedly during the course of the visit. Demirel praised the constructive role played by the OSCE and reiterated his country's invitation to host the next OSCE summit. Although the offer was noted in the Lisbon Document with a decision expected later this year, some individuals, including the Commission Co-Chairmen, oppose the initiative based on Turkey's poor human rights record.

Prime Minister Erbakan and others took the offensive by voicing concern over the treatment of the nearly 3 million Turks living and working elsewhere in Europe, citing violent attacks and the firebombing of Turkish homes. Members of the delegation joined in condemn-

ing these acts, while emphasizing the fact that such crimes are committed by individuals and not the State. While virtually all of the Turkish leaders were willing to admit that shortcomings in Turkey's human rights record exist, few were willing to be specific. The delegation, while acknowledging that certain legal changes had been adopted since the 1995 visit, stressed the importance of implementation and the need to translate such changes into improved human



OSCE PA President Ruperez meets Turkey's Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan

rights for all citizens, including the Kurds. The delegation met with stiff opposition whenever the subject of a personal representative of the Chair-in-Office was raised.

Meral Aksener, Minister of Interior, read a laundry list of steps she has initiated aimed at improving human rights and "re-establishing" trust between citizens and police forces. The State Minister for Human Rights, Lütfü Esengün, indicated that efforts are under way to establish an independent human rights body and hinted at further changes to Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law and Article 312 of the Criminal Code. Members of the delegation raised several specific human rights cases with Esengün, including imprisoned journalists and the trial of Human Rights Foundation of Turkey's Center for the

Victims of Torture, located in Adana. [see related story, p. 59] Justice Minister Sevkett Kazan noted progress in combating terrorism and stressed the importance of focusing new efforts at promoting economic development in the southeastern region of Turkey. When the delegation urged the release of the imprisoned former DEP parliamentarians, Kazan said that a pardon was out of the question under the current constitution, though he promised to consider practical aspects of their imprisonment within Turkish law.

Among the numerous meetings held with members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the delegation had an opportunity to meet with the several members of the Human Rights

Committee, chaired by Demir Berberoglu. The committee is charged with investigating human rights complaints and has been active in a number of high visibility cases, including the death of ten prisoners in a prison in Diyarbakir.

The Turkish parliamentarians urged colleagues from other countries to contact the committee with human rights concerns. Taking up the suggestion, members of the OSCE PA delegation raised the case of the trial against the Adana center of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey and underscored the positive role non-governmental organizations can play in civil societies, including monitoring human rights.

The delegation was the first to visit the four former parliamentarians at Ankara's Ulucanlar Prison since the Refah-True Path coalition government came to power last summer. Leyla Zana, whose husband had been imprisoned for 11 years, expressed grave concern over the destruction of villages in the Kurd-populated southeastern region of Turkey and ongoing suppression of

Kurdish culture and language. She called for an observer team from the OSCE to be permanently deployed in Diyarbakir to monitor any violations or improvement of human rights in the region.

Yavuz Önen, head of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, painted a mixed picture of the state of human rights in the country, noting changes in certain laws while pointing out serious problems in their implementation. Önen insisted that human rights are systematically violated by the authorities and systematic torture continues in Turkish jails and prisons. He also complained that authorities have harassed the Foundation, and expressed particular concern about the broad powers delegated to

regional governors, making them "little dictators."

Deputy Chief of the General Staff General Çevik Bir explained the leading role accorded to the military under the Turkish Constitution. General Bir stressed the hostile region surrounding Turkey and praised the close ties being



OSCE PA delegation holds press conference outside Ankara's Ulucanlar Prison

forged between the Turkish armed forces and their counterparts in Israel. The General suggested that the military had accomplished its tasks in combating terrorism and that the time was ripe for the political leadership to address outstanding economic and social issues in the southeastern region of Turkey. The delegation received a detailed briefing by representatives of the General Staff on efforts to encourage respect for human rights by members of the armed forces.

During its short stay in Diyarbakir, the delegation received a lengthy briefing from the regional governor, Necati Bilican, on developments in the southeast, among the poorer regions in Turkey. Much of the presentation focused on the campaign against terrorism. The governor claimed that about 2,000 terrorists continue to op-

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Mission Resumes Work in Transdnistria

After nearly a month of refusing to cooperate with the Moldova OSCE mission, Transdnistrian authorities lifted the travel ban on mission members and normal working contacts have resumed between the mission and the multi-lateral Joint Control Commission established to monitor the Moldova-Transdnistria armistice. Valuable assistance in resolving the impasse was provided by a mediator from Ukraine, now formally included as an observer in the Joint Control Commission.

After meeting Russian Foreign Minister Primakov in early April, Moldovan and Transdnistrian officials agreed to supplement the controversial June 1996 Memorandum of Understanding in which both parties agreed to "build their relations in the framework of a common state within the borders of the Moldavian SSR as of January 1990."

☞ John Finerty



Albania, *continued from page 44*

had invested in them. Due to the popularity of these schemes, neither the government nor opposition party leaders heeded the warnings by experts about the dangers of these schemes, even though they were tied to organized crime. Others assert that the collapse of the pyramid schemes only brought to the fore underlying political problems polarizing the country. Here, however, pundits divide between those arguing that President Sali Berisha and his ruling Democratic Party have become increasingly and dangerously authoritarian—as demonstrated by the flawed May 1996 elections—and those pointing to the obstructionist record and provocative behavior of the opposition Socialist Party, the direct successor to the Stalinist regime that ruled Albania from 1945 to 1992.

While the United States Government and the international community have been supportive of Socialist Bashkim Fino's new coalition government, the reins of power remain in the hands of polarized factions, and the rebel leaders controlling southern Albania appear to be an independent and highly unpredictable force. The populace remains vulnerable to violence, with frequent shootouts and spontaneous incidents, from individual crime to accidental explosions of dangerous weapons, nationwide. Over 500 people have been killed since the violence erupted in February, and hundreds more have been injured.

☞ Bob Hand

Torture, *continued from page 53*

The Danish doctor stressed the importance of confidentiality as a precondition for establishing any professional contact with victims of torture. Holst underscored that the attempt by Turkish authorities to force these centers to provide the names of their clients poses a very serious threat to the existence of these centers. The trial against the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey's Adana center was cited as the latest target of this campaign. Holst called upon Turkey's friends, including the United States, to continue to place international pressure to convince Turkish authorities that the world cannot tolerate or excuse the use of torture for any reason by a member of the Council of Europe and NATO.

Doug Johnson, Executive Director of the Minnesota-based Center for the Victims of Torture, expressed grave concern over attacks by Turkish authorities against centers for victims of torture located in Turkey on what he characterized as spurious charges. Johnson asserted that the Turkish Foreign Ministry has played a central role in attempting to shut down the Human Rights Foundation. While charges against the Ankara and Izmir centers were never pursued, and the trial against the Istanbul center ended in acquittal, the proceedings against the center in Adana are continuing. Johnson described the intimidating effect of the Adana case on legal and medical professionals attempting to assist victims of torture in Turkey and urged the Commission to send an observer to the trial in Adana as a demonstration of continued support for the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey.

Johnson also called for a congressional investigation into reports that materials used in some Department of Defense and CIA training programs included sections on various torture techniques.

☞ Ron McNamara



Delegation, *continued from page 57*

erate in the region with an additional 4,500 to 5,000 terrorists located in neighboring countries. He suggested that most of the victims of terrorism are of Kurdish origin. A series of brief meetings was held with business groups who explained the region's economic hardship and voiced frustration at being largely ignored by the country's political leadership. The delegation requested a meeting with representatives of the Lawyers Bar Association to discuss the human rights situation, but was informed that such a meeting could not be arranged during the delegation's short visit in Diyarbakir.

☞ Ron McNamara



Adana court hears Human Rights Foundation case

Center for Victims of Torture trial in Adana concludes

The trial against the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey's Adana center for victims of torture ended on May 2, in a case prolonged for nearly a year. Mustafa Çinkilic, a lawyer working at the Adana center, and Dr. Tufan Köse, the chief physician at the facility, were charged after they refused to surrender the medical records of 167 clients treated at the Center. The authorities sought access to the confidential files on the pretext that the information could be used to prosecute those responsible for the torture.

A delegation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly visiting Turkey in late April raised the Adana case in meetings with Turkey's State Minister for Human Rights as well as members of the Human Rights Committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. In a 1996 resolution on Turkey, the OSCE PA urged "the Turkish Government to take urgent action to halt widespread use of torture by police and other officials, and to end its persecution of medical professionals and NGOs who provide treatment to victims of torture and expose human rights abuses." Commission staff, as a member of the Assembly delegation, attended the trial.

At the heart of the Adana trial was the issue of the confidential nature of the patient-doctor relationship, supported by the World Medical Association, of which Turkey is a member. The defense attorney representing

Çinkilic and Köse suggested, during court proceedings, that "the trial has been launched with the aim of hindering the work of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey." The Foundation operates similar treatment and rehabilitation centers in Ankara, Izmir, and Istanbul. Since 1990, the centers have assisted over 3,000 torture victims.

Addressing the court, Mustafa Çinkilic insisted that he had broken no law and that the trial was a veiled attempt to close down the Adana center and put an end to the operations of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey. Speaking on his own behalf, Dr. Köse demanded his acquittal, arguing that medical ethics bound physicians with responsibility for upholding confidentiality in the patient-doctor relationship. Mr. Çinkilic faced a possible sentence of from 3 to 6 months in prison, while Dr. Köse was subject to fines on charges of "failure to notify the treated victims of torture to the competent authorities and opening an unlicensed health center."

Mustafa Çinkilic was acquitted of any wrongdoing. Dr. Tufan Köse was fined 18 million Turkish Lira (approximately \$135). The Human Rights Foundation of Turkey is appealing the verdict against Dr. Köse in light of its far-reaching implications on the patient-doctor relationship and its impact on efforts to provide professional assistance to the victims of torture.

✉ Ron McNamara

Croatia, continued from page 45

tion parties hope to capitalize on the people's apparent desire for change.

Subsequent observation of the elections by Commission staff, under the auspices of the OSCE PA, revealed improvements since the last elections. While Croatian authorities and the population as a whole remain hesitant about any substantial reintegration of ethnic Serbs (who represented 12 percent of the country's population before the conflict), Serbs in Eastern Slavonia were given—and largely utilized—the opportunity to receive the necessary Croatian documentation in order to vote.

Their strong participation, along with a slightly smaller population of Croats and other non-Serbs still displaced from the region, moves reintegration to the stage of power-sharing as the UN Administration prepares to depart later this year. The return of those displaced from Eastern Slavonia and of those Serbs now in Eastern Slavonia who would like to return to other parts of the country where they originally lived, will present greater challenges, but can now be addressed squarely with this successful election.

For the rest of the country, election observers noted some increased transparency in the electoral process which improves public confidence, although non-partisan domestic election observers—as opposed to those from political parties—were prohibited. Some administrative decisions regarding election procedures seemed beneficial to the ruling party, but they did not blatantly stretch legally permissible activity, such as certain decisions made in previous elections. The obvious bias of

the state-run broadcast media's news coverage, and the effect of the government's consistent attempts to limit the diversity of the print media, detracted seriously from the fairness of the elections during the critical campaign period.

The ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) kept approximately the same comfortable majority in the up-

per house that has existed since 1993, barely reclaimed a majority on the Zagreb city council, and achieved majorities in 14 of 20 counties and in over three-fourths of the municipal councils, despite losing in some major cities. Indications of political transformation were more apparent in the



(l to r) Nenad Porjes, Milbert Shin, moderator Bob Hand, Vesna Pusic, and Jonas Rolett brief the Commission on Croatia

shifting relative strength between opposition parties, especially for the successor to the former ruling Communist Party—the Social Democratic Party (SDP)—which has had to overcome its legacy of one-party rule and attachment to Yugoslavia. Thus, while political *control* did not change hands, the elections in Croatia did signal a shift in political *power* and *momentum*. The extent to which future political transformation for even higher stakes will be allowed to run its course, however, remains to be seen. While positive steps—including the surrender of a war crimes indictee to the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague—occurred immediately after the elections, Croatia is still perceived to be behind in fulfilling its democratic development.

✉ Bob Hand, with contributions from Stephanie Redmond.



Three OSCE Heads-of-State cited by NGO as “Enemies of the Press”

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) listed the leaders of Turkey, Belarus and Albania amongst their “10 Enemies of the Press” on World Press Freedom Day, May 3. They were chosen for their ruthless campaigns of suppression of journalists.

“These ten individuals are characterized by their relentless hostility to the very concept of a free and independent press in their own countries and around the world,” said William A. Orme, Jr., CPJ’s executive director. “They have deliberately engaged in hundreds of press freedom violations ranging from censorship, harassment and physical attack to imprisonment and even assassination.”

CPJ’s comments on those OSCE leaders listed were:

“Turkey’s Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. Erbakan keeps up Turkey’s repression of independent journalists. The press remains under threat from the sweeping provisions of the anti-terror law and the penal code, which permit the arrest and prosecution of journalists for critical reporting on the government’s ongoing conflict with Kurdish insurgents. Broadening his assault, he increasingly subjects journalists to arbitrary detention and trial for expression of unfavorable political opinions. Under Erbakan’s regime, 78 journalists were in jail at the beginning of 1997—more than in any other country.

“Belarus’ President Alexander Lukashenko. Lukashenko bullies the press with Soviet-era tactics, tightening his stranglehold by shutting down independent media and publicly denouncing journalists. He expelled

Russia’s best-known independent television bureau chief for “distorted coverage.” Before signing an integration agreement with Russia in March, he instituted prior censorship and blocked the dissemination of information “deemed harmful to the interests of Belarus.”

“Albania’s President Sali Berisha. Berisha, until recently the West’s favorite East European anti-Communist, reverted to his predecessors’ methods by muzzling the press in the state of emergency declared in March to quash mass public protests over failed financial pyramid schemes. Berisha’s dreaded secret police raided and then torched the newsroom of the main opposition daily, *Koha Jone*. Journalists, beaten and intimidated, were forced to flee the country or seek refuge in foreign embassies in Tirana. Ongoing attacks on journalists and seizure of critical publications belie his claim to have lifted censorship.”

These observations only serve to emphasize concerns previously voiced by the Helsinki Commission and reported in the *Digest*. The actions of these leaders not only bring into question their commitment—and that of their government—to the freedom of speech, but to their commitments in the Human Dimension of the Helsinki process.

Other world leaders listed by the CPJ as enemies of the press included: Algeria’s Antar Zouabri, head of the militant Armed Islamic Group (GIA); China’s President Jiang Zemin; Cuba’s President Fidel Castro; Nigeria’s General Sani Abacha; Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Meles Zenawi; Indonesia’s President Suharto; and, Burma’s Senior General Than Shwe. ☞ Chadwick R. Gore

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